

Material, that is to say unformed or unshaped matter, is the field where authority blocks independent experimentation less than in many other fields, and for this reason it seems well fitted to become the training ground for invention and free speculation. It is here that even the shyest beginner can catch a glimpse of the exhilaration of creating, by being a creator while at the same time he is checked by irrevocable laws set by the nature of the material, not by man. Free experimentation here can result in the fulfillment of an inner urge to give form and to give permanence to ideas, that is to say, it can result in art, or it can result in the satisfaction of invention in some more technical way.

But most important to one's own growth is to see oneself leave the safe ground of accepted conventions and to find oneself alone and self-dependent. It is an adventure which can permeate one's whole being. Self-confidence can grow. And a longing for excitement can be satisfied without external means, within oneself; for creating is the most intense excitement one can come to know.

All art work, such as music, architecture, and even religion and the laws of science, can be understood as the transformed wish for stability and order. But art work understood as work with a substance which can be grasped and formed is more suited for the development of the taste for exploration than work in other fields, for the fact of the inherent laws of material is of importance. They introduce boundaries for a task of free imagination. This very freedom can be so bewildering to the searching person that it may lead to resignation if he is faced with the immense welter of possibilities; but within set limits the imagination can find something to hold to. There still remains a fullness of choice but one not as overwhelming as that offered by unlimited opportunities. These boundaries may be conceived as the skeleton of a structure. To the beginners a material with very definite limitations can for this reason be most helpful in the process of building up independent work.

The crafts, understood as conventions of treating material, introduce another factor: traditions of operation which embody set laws. This may be helpful in one direction, as a frame for work. But these rules may also evoke a challenge. They are revokable, for they are set by man. They may provoke us to test ourselves against them. But always they provide a discipline which balances the *hubris* of creative ecstasy.

All crafts are suited to this end, but some better than others. The more possibilities for attack the material offers in its appearance and in its constructional elements, the more it can call out imagination and productiveness. Weaving is an example of a craft which is